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MATERIALS

FOR A

SPEECH

IN DEFENCE OF

THE POLICY OF ABANDONING

THE

ORANGE RIVER TERRITORY.

MAY, 1854.

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June 21, 1940

THE Delegates from the Transvaal to Her Majesty's Government avail themselves of the permission kindly accorded by Lady Molesworth to re-publish the following pamphlet.

They have thought that the facts and arguments therein put forward are so true and just as regarded the Orange Free State in 1854, and that they apply with so much greater force to the present position of Transvaal, that they cannot but hope that the reproduction of the opinions of so distinguished a statesman may prove of service to their country and people.

S. J. P. KRUGER.

P. J. JOUBERT.

ALBEMARLE HOTEL,
October, 1878.

MATERIALS FOR A SPEECH,

&c. &c.

IF any person will refer to a map of Southern Africa, and examine the position of the Orange River territory; if he will consider its situation with regard to the colony of the Cape of Good Hope; if he will ascertain the nature of the country and the character of the races of men who inhabit it; and if he will estimate the cost of retaining it: I think that he must arrive at the conclusion that we ought never to have taken possession of that territory; and having arrived at that conclusion, he must I think, ultimately arrive at the conclusion that the determination of the Government to abandon the Orange River territory was a wise and a prudent one, which Parliament ought to ratify.

For if he will look at a map of that part of the world, he will see that South Africa stretches from the Equator towards the Southern Pole in the shape of a huge blunt promontory. It is an elevated table land, bathed on three sides by three oceans, namely, the Atlantic, the Antarctic, and the Indian. From the shores of these oceans, the surface of the land rises towards the interior, not gradually, but by a succession of terraces, that are separated from each other, and from the great upland of the interior, by ranges of rugged mountains. The lowest terrace, that nearest the seaboard, is fertile; the upper terraces are sterile, and become more sterile, and the dividing ranges more rugged, as they ascend towards the interior. On the southern declivity of this great promontory, stretched out for five hundred miles along the terraced shores of the Antarctic Ocean, is our colony of the Cape of Good

Hope. It is cut off from the interior by the ranges of rugged mountains which I have just described. Beyond those mountains are deserts which extend northwards to the Orange River. These mountains and deserts are almost impassable, and they form for nearly six hundred miles the great natural bulwark of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope against the incursions of the savages who dwell on the plains of the Orange and Yellow Rivers. In the fork of these two rivers, in the heart of the southern portion of the great upland of South Africa, beyond the mountains, beyond the deserts, is a tract of land, about the size of England; this is the Orange River territory; though less sterile than the adjacent desert, it is not capable of producing anything of much value; it is incapable of extensive commerce, for, as I have already said, it is cut off from the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, from the seaboard, and therefore from civilization, by mountains and deserts. It is inhabited by a few Europeans of Dutch descent, who hate the name and dominion of England. It is inhabited also by many warlike barbarians, who are rapidly acquiring skill in the use of fire-arms and the habits of horsemen. It is exposed along an open frontier of five hundred miles to the incursions of the unnumbered tribes of the great South African race of Kafirs. To keep possession of the Orange River territory, Sir George Cathcart estimates that at least two thousand troops would at present be required, of whom one-fourth should be cavalry. To maintain these troops in the heart of South Africa would cost this country directly and indirectly not less than £200,000 a-year. This expenditure would increase, and the number of our troops would have to be augmented, in proportion as the savages by contact with us became better acquainted with the use of fire-arms, and with the arts of European warfare. The new Kafir wars, similar to those of the eastern frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, would be waged in the Orange River territory, but on a larger and more expensive scale; and in return for our expenditure we should reap neither honor, nor profit, nor renown.

These facts, I think, suffice of themselves to shew how undesirable an acquisition the Orange River territory was, and how desirable it would be to abandon it, if the causes which led to the acquisition of that territory, or the obligations attendant on its acquisition, do not now forbid its abandonment with honor.

What were those causes? We entered the Orange River territory in pursuit of the Dutch Boers, when they fled from the eastern frontier of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope. They fled in consequence of the change which we made, about twenty years ago, in our South African policy. The new policy, then adopted, rapidly led to a vast increase of our possessions in South Africa: it led to the annexation of Natal, to the acquisition of the Orange River sovereignty, and to the extension of the nominal dominion of England over an empire twice the size of the United Kingdom, the greater portion of which is a howling desert, as barren as any on the face of the earth. If that new policy be adhered to, that worthless empire must continue to augment, till it extend to the Equator, and cover a large portion of the continent of Africa.

The question, therefore, whether we ought to retain or abandon the Orange River territory, may, I think, be resolved into the question whether we ought to persevere in or reverse that policy, which I have already said we adopted about twenty years ago. Before that period our South African policy towards the native races was similar to that of our Dutch predecessors. I will describe that policy in as few words as I can.

About two centuries ago, the Dutch landed on the south-western extremity of Africa. They found in the neighbourhood some tribes of a native race whom they named Hottentots, and who were then a numerous and happy people; living under the patriarchial government of chiefs; wandering about with flocks and herds in small communities; clothed in sheepskins; dwelling in moveable huts; riding on oxen; armed with bows, poisoned arrows, and light javelins; active and skilful in the chase; mild in disposition, but courageous in warfare; diminu-

tive in stature, yet well proportioned ; with ugly countenances and features like the Chinese. The Hottentots seem to have been the aboriginal inhabitants of British South Africa. The greater portion of the race has perished, slain partly by European, partly by native foes. For about the same time that the Hottentots were attacked from the west by the Dutch, they were assailed from the east by those tribes of the great South African race whom we call Kafirs.

According to the best authorities, all Africa, from the Orange River to the Equator, and from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean, a vast space covering 27 degrees of latitude by 25 of longitude, is inhabited by innumerable tribes, speaking analogous languages ; and though differing much in physical form, yet all probably belonging to one great South African race. The tribes who inhabit the interior, or dwell on the eastern seaboard in the neighbourhood of our dominions, consist of tall, athletic, and well-proportioned men, with peculiar countenances, combining the high forehead and prominent nose of the European, the thick lips and woolly hair of the negro, with the high cheek-bones of the Tartar. They are said to be acute, intelligent, high-spirited, and brave ; but cruel to their enemies, cruel to each other under the influence of superstition, and readily obeying the cruellest commands of their chiefs. Their religion, if they have any, is a sanguinary superstition, and all the efforts of the missionaries to convert them to Christianity have invariably failed. They live under their chiefs in large communities. Though seminomadic, some of the tribes have towns of considerable size, moveable like camps ; other tribes are subject to a regular military system, and at times form large and conquering armies. They seem to have the remains of a higher social state ; they possess the rudiments of various arts ; have some knowledge of agriculture and of the working of metals. Their chief wealth and most valued property are cattle ; in their eyes cattle-stealing from other tribes, and especially from Europeans, is no crime, but when skilfully performed a meritorious act, to which they are much tempted by their custom of pur-

chasing their wives with cattle. These tribes were first called Kafirs by Arab voyagers, who gave that name to all savage nations who had not been converted to Islam. The Portuguese and Dutch adopted it, and transmitted it to us, who have applied it specifically to those tribes of the great South African race, with whom we have come in contact on the eastern frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. One of those tribes is the well-known Amakosa, our most resolute foes. Of them the tradition is that they descended from the interior through a gap in the mountains, and advancing from the north-east along the terraces of the seaboard, settled about two centuries ago on the banks of the river Kei. As their herds and numbers increased they moved on westward, driving out and exterminating the Hottentots, until they came in contact with the Dutch, who were doing the same thing from the opposite direction. For some of the Dutch, finding South Africa to be best fitted for the rearing of flocks and herds, became a pastoral people. They spread themselves over the surface of the land, increased, and multiplied. To provide food for their augmenting flocks and herds, new and extensive pastures were required; and the Boers (as the pastoral Dutch are called) also drove out and exterminated the Hottentots. The Boers are a fine, tall, athletic race, good-humoured, but prone to anger, bred in solitude or among inferior beings whom they despise; they are self-willed, self-relying, and apt to be tyrannical.

When Boer and Kafir met on the eastern frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the superior cattle of the Dutch irresistibly tempted the cupidity of the savage; and a border warfare ensued, similar to what raged in olden times on the frontier of England and Scotland, and on the Indian frontier of our North American plantations. The Dutch combined for mutual assistance, and formed an organized system of self-defence, well known as the Commando system. When the cattle of the Dutch were stolen, they assembled under their captains, followed the traces of their property, seized it or its equivalent wherever they found it, and righted themselves with a strong hand. In these excursions, the Boer drew no distinction

between the prowling and marauding savage and the beast of prey, but shot down with equal zest the cattle stealing lion or Kafir, and slew the bushman as a hideous noxious reptile. The South African savages, who worship brute force, to whom leniency seems weakness and cruelty strength, and who are accustomed to be slaughtered in crowds by their chiefs, dreaded the promptitude and energy of the Boer, were appalled by his courage and prowess, and feared more one mounted Boer with his mighty roer than a score of Her Majesty's best disciplined troops. Under this system of self-defence the Boers defended themselves as successfully on the eastern frontier of the Cape of Good Hope as their descendants have done in Natal and the Orange River territory, and now do under the Tropic of Capricorn, whither they successively fled to escape from our dominion. This system of self-defence was confirmed and enforced by Lord Macartney in 1797. It [existed in full vigor in 1806, when we took final possession of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and it continued in force till 1833, when it was abolished.

Before I speak of the causes which led to the abolition of the system of self-defence, I wish to direct attention to some very important facts which show how much less was the military expenditure of this country on account of South Africa under the system of self-defence, than it has been since the abolition of that system in 1833. At the termination of the last European war, namely, in 1816, our military force in South Africa amounted to 4,500 men. From that period it was gradually reduced, till in 1833 it amounted only to 1,100 men. Since then it has steadily and greatly increased, and with an increase of force there has been of course an increase of expenditure. On the average of the eight years previous to the abolition of the system of self-defence, the number of our troops in South Africa did not exceed 1,100 men, and in the last of those years, our military expenditure on account of South Africa amounted only to 100,000*l*. Contrast this expenditure with that of the eight years previous to the commencement of the last Kafir war in 1851. On the

average of those years the number of our troops in South Africa amounted to 4,800 men, and our military expenditure on account of them averaged 460,000*l.* a year; nearly fivefold what it was before the abolition of the system of self-defence.

The returns to which I am referring also shew that since the abolition of that system, our military expenditure on account of South Africa has increased in nearly the same ratio for periods of peace as for periods of war.

For instance, 1832 and 1833 were years of peace, and in those years the expenditure amounted to 100,000*l.* and 97,000*l.* respectively. 1835 was a year of war, and in that year the expenditure rose to 243,000*l.* 1843, 1844, and 1845 were years of peace, and for those years the expenditure amounted to 346,000*l.*, 353,000*l.*, and 246,000*l.* respectively. The years 1846 and 1847 were years of war, and for the former the expenditure was 948,000*l.*, and for the latter 770,000*l.* The years 1848, 1849, and 1850 were years of peace, and for them the expenditure was 479,000*l.*, 292,000*l.*, and 375,000*l.* respectively. Lastly, 1851 and 1852 were years of war. I do not yet know the cost of the last war; it could not have been less than that of 1846 and 1847, for at one period of the last war we had above 9,000 troops stationed in South Africa. These returns, therefore, show that our military expenditure in South Africa has gradually increased since the abolition of the system of self-defence; that our peace expenditure and our war expenditure have each of them nearly trebled; that peace has become as expensive as war used to be; and that in the eight years preceding the last Kafir war South Africa cost us 3,700,000*l.* Nearly simultaneous with this increase of expenditure has been the increase of our territory in South Africa. In 1833, our possessions in South Africa covered an area of 110,000 square miles; at present they contain, including the Orange River sovereignty, about 230,000 square miles. Their extent has, therefore, more than doubled since the abolition of the system of self-defence.

I will now speak of the causes of the abolition of the system of self-defence, and the consequences of that

abolition, namely, the flight of the Boer into the Orange River territory, and the subsequent annexation of that territory to our dominions. About 1833, a strong feeling was excited in this country with regard to the treatment of the coloured races in our colonies. This feeling was produced by the exertions of some very amiable and very excellent men, who were, however, frequently very ill-informed. These worthy visionaries imagined that the fierce savages of South Africa, who delight in exterminating wars, who revel in human slaughter, and whose only notion of a deity is a blood-stained demon, were true arcadian shepherds (such as poets have fabled) living in pastoral simplicity, quietly tending their flocks and herds, and peacefully worshipping Pan and the Nymphs, till their pastorals were disturbed by the brutal and inhuman White. Under the influence of these fancies, the friends of the Aborigines believed that in every dispute between the Dutch and the Kafir, the Kafir was invariably in the right, and the Dutch invariably in the wrong, and they denounced the system of self-defence as a means adopted for gratifying the vengeance and cupidity of the Boer. These day-dreams were mistaken for realities by the excitable classes in this country, whose sensibilities are oftentimes more easily roused by fictitious wrongs abroad than real suffering at home. Among these credulous sentimentalists were some of the ministers of the day, and emotion in place of reason determined their colonial policy.

In 1833, the present Lord Derby was Secretary of State for the Colonies. He consulted Sir Lowry Cole, who had been Governor of the Cape of Good Hope from 1828 to 1833, on the subject of the immediate abolition of the system of self-defence. Sir Lowry Cole, in reply, assured Lord Derby that he had been grossly misinformed with regard to the conduct of the Boers; that from the earliest period the frontier had been defended by the Burgher force alone: and Sir Lowry Cole expressed his decided opinion, that the system of self-defence ought not to be abolished. Lord Derby entirely disregarded this opinion, ordered the immediate abolition of the system of self-defence, and bade Sir Benjamin d'Urban, who was

then Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, to devise some measure in its stead, "a task," which Lord Derby justly observed, "was one of no ordinary difficulty." Lord Derby, however, suggested as one of the means of accomplishing this task, that Sir B. d'Urban should endeavour to enter into diplomatic relations with the savage chiefs on the frontier. Sir B. d'Urban obeyed these instructions as far as possible. Then commenced a series of ludicrous treaties between his Britannic Majesty on the one side, and the barbarous chiefs of South Africa on the other—treaties which the savage never kept one moment longer than he thought it for his interest to keep them, and which his Britannic Majesty invariably broke whenever the Governor of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope deemed it expedient to do so. The first of these treaties on record, the type of the subsequent ones, was concluded in 1834 with a chief residing on the confines of the Orange River territory, one Andreas Waterboer by name. This man was a vagabond Hottentot, whom some missionary had appointed chief of a band of Hottentot banditti and Bastards (a mongrel breed between the Dutch and Hottentot), who had fled from the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and settled on the banks of the Orange River, whence they plundered the frontier farmers. The stipulations of this treaty were, that Waterboer and his gang should cease to rob us, and should assist in recovering stolen property, and that we should pay him a certain sum of money annually, should furnish him with muskets and ammunition, and should give his missionary a stipend for educating the young savages. This treaty was hailed with high satisfaction by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, as completely realising the views of His Majesty's ministers, of what ought to be the policy of Great Britain towards the nations of Africa. The intended object of this policy was to diffuse the blessings of peace throughout South Africa, to educate the savage, and to inspire him with a taste for the arts of civilized life. The result of that policy has been to multiply wars, to inspire the savage with a taste for muskets and ammunition, and to educate him in the use of fire-arms.

The consequences of that education were felt by our troops in their recent conflict with the tribes of the Orange River territory. Twenty years ago those tribes scarcely possessed a musket or a horse. In 1852, "our faithful friend and ally," Moshesh, chief of the Basutos, was able to bring into the field against us 6,000 cavalry and 2,000 infantry. According to the statement of Sir George Cathcart, the infantry were well armed generally with fire-arms as well as assagaais; the cavalry were almost all clothed in European costume and with saddles, and evinced not only by their equipments but by their movements a degree of military efficiency little inferior to irregular Cossacks or Circassians. To overcome them we had to send into the Orange River territory a force of 2,000 British troops. In the battle of Berea, on the 20th of December, 1852, the Basutos fought bravely, and our victory over them was won by the loss of many gallant soldiers.

I will next describe the effects of the important change which was made in the relations of the British Government towards both the colonists and the natives of South Africa, by the abolition of the system of self-defence and the institution of the treaty system. Under the system of self-defence the Boer had to defend himself against the Kafir, and the Kafir against the Boer; when they quarrelled they fought it out with roer and assagaai; and after some sanguinary conflicts they generally kept on tolerably good terms. This has been the case whenever Boer and Kafir have been left alone, whether on the eastern frontier of the Cape of Good Hope, or in Natal, or in the Orange territory, or in the country beyond the Vaal. By the abolition of the system of self-defence, and the substitution of the treaty system, we engaged to protect, by means of British troops, and at the expense of this country, the Boer against the Kafir, and the Kafir against the Boer; to put a stop to the thefts of the one and the retaliations of the other. These engagements we did not fulfil; nor could we have fulfilled them without a much larger military force than we ever maintained in South Africa; but our intermeddling made us equally hated by Boer and Kafir, and both accused us of bad

faith. The Kafir continued to steal: in our efforts to check his depredations we got involved in expensive Kafir wars: the first, in 1835, cost half a million; the second, in 1846 and 1847, cost two millions; and the one just ended must have been the most expensive of the three. On the other hand, the Boer complained that the British Government, who had deprived him of the right of redressing his own wrongs, had failed to protect him against the Kafir. The Boer felt deeply aggrieved by the abolition of the system of self-defence; he was profoundly irritated by the calumnies of the friends of the aborigines. He deemed neither his life nor property secure on the eastern frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. He determined to quit our dominions, to abandon his home—the old home of his fathers—and to seek a new home in the wilderness among savages, whom he feared not when he had to encounter them alone. Then commenced a strange race across South Africa, between the flying Boer and the pursuing Colonial Office—the strangest race that ever was run by mortal men.

It was about the year 1836, three years after the abolition of the system of self-defence, that the Boers began in large numbers to leave the eastern frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. Before they did so they sent out an exploring party, who brought back intelligence of a remote territory on the Indian Ocean, called Natal, and said to be well adapted for pastoral purposes. The Boers imagined that we should never covet Natal, for its coast was without harbours; it was separated from our South African dominions by a tract of land four hundred miles in width, inhabited by innumerable tribes of indomitable Kafirs. On the one side it was exposed to the incursions of these fierce tribes; on the other side it was open to the attacks of the fiercer Zoolahs, who had lately exterminated its inhabitants. As Natal could never be of use to us, either as a commercial colony or as a military station, the Boers hoped that we would permit them to occupy it without molestation. They therefore determined to emigrate to Natal. Before they commenced their journey they inquired of

the colonial authorities whether there was any law which forbade them to quit the British dominions, and to establish a government of their own beyond the limits of those dominions. The Lieut.-Governor replied that no such law was known to exist, and that if such a law did exist it was a tyrannical one which could not be enforced. Having received this answer, the Boers commenced their march to Natal. Their direct road would have been through Kafir-land, but the easiest way, and the one which they adopted, was to ascend to the interior of South Africa, to traverse the Orange River territory for about 300 miles, and finally to descend on Natal through a gap in the mountains, which run parallel to the shores of the Indian Ocean.

In 1836, the Boers crossed the Orange River, and encamped for a time with their flocks and herds on the plains between the Orange and the Yellow Rivers. The cattle of the Dutch immediately excited the cupidity of the fierce savages who dwelt upon the banks of the Vaal or Yellow River, and the Matabili, as they were called, boldly attacked the Boers. The Boers, as was their wont, fortified their camps with barricades composed of their waggons, ranged in double circle, well lashed together, and with the intervals filled with thorn bushes. In the centre of this circle the Boers placed their women and children, and repulsed, at first with some difficulty, the desperate onslaughts of the courageous savages. Finally, the Boers gained the upper hand, routed the Matabili, and compelled them and their king Moselekatse to fly beyond the southern tropic. Then one portion of the Boers determined to remain in the Orange River territory. The other portion adhered to the original intention of going to Natal. They entered that country in the autumn of 1837, and offered to purchase it from Dingaan, King of the Zoolahs. Dingaan was the brother, the murderer, and the successor of the renowned warrior Chaka, who about thirty years ago reigned over a great monarchy in South Africa, which extended from Delagoa Bay on the north to Kafir-land on the south, and from the shores of the Indian Ocean to the banks of the Yellow River.

Chaka was the pattern of a South African despot, cruel and energetic, capricious, and careless of human life. For instance, on the death of his mother, whom he murdered, he celebrated her funeral rites by a public mourning, during which many thousands of his subjects were slaughtered for want of zeal in their lamentations. Chaka had a standing army consisting, it is said, of 50,000 warriors, divided into regiments, regularly trained and disciplined. He introduced among the Zoolahs a new mode of fighting, which made them the terror of their neighbours. He armed his troops with large shields and short stout spears. He taught them, instead of skirmishing or throwing the javelin from a distance, like the Kafirs, to rush on in dense masses to close combat, and engage their enemies hand to hand. He punished defeat with the death of the offenders and of all belonging to them. On one occasion, when some of his regiments were repulsed, he ordered the immediate massacre of 2,000 of their wives. Under this military system the Zoolahs of Chaka became invincible; they easily subdued the surrounding nations; they exterminated the natives of Natal; they would have destroyed the Kafirs but for our opposition; they routed the tribes of the Orange River territory, and precipitated them upon each other; in their perpetual and ruthless wars they spared neither women nor children; and they made the interior of South Africa a scene of carnage and confusion.

Very remarkable are the accounts which travellers have given of suddenly meeting on the plains of the Orange River territory with vast herds of human beings, like the innumerable flocks of antelopes, which seem, as it were by magic, at once to cover the land of South Africa: these human herds consisted of tens of thousands of panic-stricken men, women, and children, flying before Chaka and other conquerors. Onwards they rushed, raging with hunger and thirst, thousands dying by the way, devouring each other, expelling, exterminating, or exterminated by the tribes with whom they came in contact. Heaps of human bones still mark the spot where whole nations have perished in the Orange River territory. Thus the Zoolahs

moving southwards fell upon the Mantatees—the flying Mantatees attacked the Basutos, the Basutos the Baralongs: the remains of these tribes now dwell in the Orange River territory: with their chiefs we have made treaties, to many of them we have given muskets and ammunition, with most of them we have already fought, with all of them we shall have to fight again and again, if we retain possession of the Orange River territory; and if we do not abandon that territory we shall have to bear the brunt of every storm which, rising in the centre of South Africa, shall finally dash a wave of human beings against our open frontier.

To return to the proceedings of the Boers in Natal. Dingaan received their overtures for the purchase of Natal in a friendly manner, and promised to make a treaty with them on condition of their recovering some cattle which had been stolen from him by the Mantatees. The Boers fulfilled this condition, and their leader Retief, with one hundred followers, brought the cattle to Dingaan, at his capital of Unkunkinglove. Dingaan received the Boers with every mark of cordiality: he displayed to them his chief treasures, his countless herds of oxen, some of whom were trained to join in the Zoolah war dance. He concluded an alliance with the Boers, granted to them the whole of the territory of Natal; and finally, as the last and greatest mark of his friendship and esteem, he invited them to a grand festival and solemn dance, in honor of their approaching departure. They accepted the invitation, and were persuaded, in order to join in the festivities, to come unarmed. In the midst of the dance, three thousand Zoolah warriors fell upon the unsuspecting Boers, and massacred every one of them; some were brained, others were strangled, some empaled, some flayed alive. Then Dingaan sent an army to surprise the camp of the Boers. The surprise was complete. In the midst of the night, ten thousand Zoolah warriors rushed into the camp, swept off twenty thousand head of cattle, and killed six hundred persons, cutting off the breasts of the women, and dashing out the brains of the children. When these acts of Dingaan became known to the Boers who had remained in the

Orange River territory, a body of them hastened across the mountains to revenge their friends. In their first encounters with the Zoolahs the Boers were not very successful; subsequently they adopted a kind of Parthian warfare, by which they easily overcame the savages. The Boers are good marksmen and skilful horsemen; they are armed with long heavy muskets called roers, which carry much further than our muskets. When they meet the Zoolah warriors on the open plains, the Boers divided their force into two parties: the one party rode forward till they came within shot of the Zoolahs, then dismounted, took a steady aim and fired, then remounted, rode off at full speed to a sufficient distance, stopped and reloaded; whilst the one party retreated and reloaded, the other party advanced and fired. Every shot told on the dense masses of the Zoolahs, who rushed on furiously in vain pursuit of their ever flying conquerors. Thus alternately advancing and firing, alternately retreating and reloading, a few hundred Boers slew whole hosts of Zoolahs; on one occasion five thousand Zoolahs are said to have been killed by six hundred Boers, of whom only three were wounded. The vanquished Dingaan sued for peace, and concluded a treaty with the Boers, by which he surrendered to them the whole of Natal. Thus, in two years, the Boers, without the aid either of British troops or British gold, overcame the two most potent nations of South Africa, namely, the Matabili and the Zoolahs, who had enslaved and exterminated every native tribe from Delagoa Bay to Kafir-land, from the Indian Ocean to the desert shores of the Atlantic.

The Boers having obtained possession of Natal, established a regular government, commenced the building of a town, and would in a short time have formed a flourishing settlement, if we had let them alone; and for two or three years we did not interfere with them, neither recognizing nor denying their independence. At length a dispute arose between them and us, occasioned by our treaty system. We had made a treaty with the chief of the Amaponda Kafirs, who dwelt on the southern frontier of Natal. The Amaponda stole some cattle of the Boers.

The Boers prepared an expedition to punish the thieves. The frightened Amaponda appealed for protection to the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. He ordered the Boers not to attack our allies ; the Boers refused to obey, declaring that they had ceased to be the subjects of the British Crown. In consequence of that declaration, the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope sent a military force against the Boers ; the Boers fought bravely, and very nearly captured the first expedition, but succours arrived, the Boers were subdued, and Lord Derby, who was then a second time Secretary of State for the Colonies, annexed Natal to the British dominions.

The annexation of Natal added much to the extent of that portion of our South African frontier, which was exposed to the incursions of the savages. For in the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the great battle-field between the native and European races was the narrow strip of land which I have already described, and which runs along the shores of the southern and Indian Oceans, and is separated from the great upland of the interior by ranges of mountains and deserts. Along that strip of land had rolled the opposing tides of native and European migration. The Europeans, advancing from the west, gradually forced the natives back towards the east. As the Europeans advanced they were protected on the one flank by the ocean, on the other by mountains and deserts ; their rear was also safe, for the Europeans as they advanced drove out or exterminated the natives ; therefore, before we annexed Natal or invaded the Orange River territory, we were only exposed in front to the attacks of the Kafirs on the eastern frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope along a line which extended for about one hundred miles from the mountains to the ocean. By the annexation of Natal, our military position in South Africa towards the native races was materially changed. By adding Natal to the British dominions, we placed the unconquered Kafirs in our rear, and planted a new settlement on the Indian Ocean, separated from the old one by a territory four hundred miles in length, inhabited by numerous tribes of warlike barbarians. The

new territory, like the old one, was protected on its flanks by mountains and the ocean, but unlike the old one, it was exposed not only in the front, but also in the rear, to the attacks of savages. Therefore, the assailable frontier of Natal is double in extent that of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope; and the tribes to whose attacks Natal is exposed, namely, the Amaponda and Zoolahs, are as fierce and as brave, and when they acquire fire-arms, will be as formidable as the Amakosa, with whom we have waged such frequent and costly wars.

In consequence of the annexation of Natal, the greater portion of the Boers fled a second time from the British dominions, and recrossing the mountains, rejoined their friends in the Orange River territory. Their example was followed in 1848 by the majority of the remaining Boers, who, according to the statement of Sir H. Smith, abandoned their farms, leaving their crops standing, rather than fulfil the obligations of a proclamation of doubtful expediency, which had been issued by the Lieut.-Governor of Natal. Sir H. Smith has given a striking description of the condition of these emigrant Boers, whom he met in 1848 on his road to Natal. He wrote to Lord Grey—
 “On my arrival at the foot of the Drachensberg Mountains, I was almost paralysed to witness the whole of the population, with few exceptions, emigrating. Rains on this side of the mountains are tropical and now prevail, and these families were exposed to a state of misery which I never before saw equalled, except in Massena’s invasion of Portugal, when the whole of the population of that part of the seat of war abandoned their homes and fled—the scene here was truly heart-rending.” Sir H. Smith assembled the emigrants, and addressed them by means of their leader, the famous Pretorius, whom Sir H. Smith described “as a shrewd, sensible man, who had recently been into the colony to lay the subject of the dissatisfaction of his countrymen before the Governor, when he was unfortunately refused an audience, and returned after so long a journey, expressing himself as the feelings of a proud and injured man would naturally prompt.”

These Boers fled from Natal into the Orange River territory in the hope of escaping from our dominion. The hope proved a vain one, for Sir Harry Smith immediately took possession of that territory. Its annexation was the logical consequence of our system of treaties with the native chiefs, and of an Act of Parliament which the friends of the Aborigines obtained in the year 1836. I speak of the 6 and 7 W. 4, c. 57, which enacted that all crimes committed by British subjects, without the British dominions, in any territory adjacent to the colony of the Cape of Good Hope southward of the 25th degree of south latitude, should be tried and punished in the same manner as if the crimes had been committed within our South African territories. The alleged object of this strange enactment was to preserve the peace of South Africa, which the Boers were accused of disturbing. This accusation cannot be sustained, for I have shewn that the ordinary state of South Africa was one of permanent and exterminating warfare, and it would be easy to shew that the Boers did introduce some germs of order amidst the jarring elements of South African chaos. It is evident that if such a statute as that of the 6 and 7 W. 4 were enforced, it must lead step by step to the assumption of our sovereignty over every territory to which the statute was applicable; for it required that all persons committing crimes in certain places without the British dominions, should be punished. But to punish criminals it is necessary first to apprehend them. To apprehend criminals in a foreign territory, the assistance of the chief of the territory is generally required. Therefore, to secure such assistance we made treaties with the chiefs of the territories adjacent to the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. But savage chiefs are not always zealous in fulfilling the stipulations of treaties. Consequently, to stimulate their zeal we appointed an agent to reside amongst them, and he was empowered under the statute to act as a magistrate in their territories. Occasions, however, occurred when the magisterial dignity and authority of the British resident was menaced, and it was thought necessary to send a body of troops to uphold his influence. Such

occasions were apt to recur, but it was very expensive to march troops backwards and forwards, especially in the interior of South Africa, where no roads exist, and where frequently neither water nor fuel nor forage can be obtained. It was therefore considered to be an economical measure to station a body of troops along with our agent in the independent territory of our savage ally. Thus effect was given to the provisions of the statute of the 6 and 7 W. 4, c. 57. But it was soon discovered that if this law were strictly enforced, glaring injustice would be done to British subjects. For under the provisions of the statute, only persons who were British subjects could be punished in the foreign territory. Therefore natives, who were not British subjects, could not be punished for their crimes against British subjects, though British subjects were punished for their crimes against natives. Evidently there was only one mode of removing this anomaly, and that was to convert the natives into British subjects. This was easily done by a proclamation of the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, which added another worthless kingdom to our barren South African Empire.

Such were the steps by which our treaty system, and the statute of 6 and 7 W. 4, c. 57, gradually led to the annexation of the Orange River territory. For instance, in 1843 we concluded treaties with the chiefs of that territory. In 1845 our allies, the Griquas, and the emigrant Boers, quarrelled on the usual subject of South African quarrel, namely, cattle stealing. The Griquas sought assistance from the Governor of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope; it was immediately given; a body of British troops crossed the Orange River and defeated the Boers; then a British agent was appointed to reside in Griqua-land with a small force to support his authority; and finally in 1848 Sir Harry Smith converted 100,000 savages and 10,000 Boers into rebellious subjects of the British Crown. This proceeding produced great indignation in the minds of the Boers, who, as I have already said, had left Natal in the hope of escaping from our dominion. Their leader, Pretorius, asserted that Sir Harry Smith had broken faith with them; that during their famous inter-

view at the foot of the Drachensberg Mountains, Sir Harry Smith had told the Boers that he would not compel them to be British subjects, and that he would not annex the Orange River sovereignty unless the great majority of them were in favour of annexation. Pretorius declared that nine-tenths of the Boers were hostile to the annexation of the Orange River territory. They therefore refused to acknowledge our sovereignty, and without opposition on the part of any of our lieges they drove the British President and his guards across the Orange River. Sir Harry Smith immediately collected a body of troops and led them against the Boers, whom he encountered on the field of Boem Plaats, 29th August, 1848. The Boers fought with their usual courage. Sir Harry Smith declared that he believed it to have been one of the severest skirmishes ever witnessed; that "a more rapid, fierce, and well-directed fire than that of the Boers he had never seen maintained, and for some time they had manfully held their ground." Finally our troops gained the victory. During the action no prisoners were taken, for none of the Boers would yield to quarter, and with good reason; for after the conflict was over one Boer was captured, whom Sir Harry Smith caused to be shot as a rebel.

Then for the third time the Boers fled from our dominions. They crossed the Vaal or Yellow River, and marched northwards, intending to pass beyond the 25th degree of south latitude, and thus to escape from the provisions of the 6 and 7 W. 4, c. 57. The colonial authorities were unwilling to be outwitted in this manner; they brought the evasion of the statute under the consideration of Lord Grey, and complained of various independent proceedings of the Trans-Vaal Boers. In consequence of these representations, Lord Grey empowered Sir Harry Smith to send an expedition to punish the Trans-Vaal Boers as far as he could legally do so under the statute, namely, as far as the 25th degree of south latitude; and Lord Grey promised to introduce into Parliament in the next session of 1851, a Bill to extend the provisions of the 6 and 7 W. 4, c. 57, to the Equator. But the Kafir

War of 1851, by fully occupying our troops on the eastern frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, prevented the Trans-Vaal expedition, and the wisdom of Parliament would, I am convinced, have rejected any measure for extending the provisions of the 6 and 7 W. 4, c. 57, to the Equator, if any such measure had been proposed. For if such a measure had received the sanction of Parliament, and were enforced, then by precisely the same process, and by precisely the same steps, by which I have already shewn that the original statute led to the annexation of the Orange River sovereignty, the extended statute would, in the course of time, have extended our South African dominion over every territory between the 25th degree of south latitude and the Equator.

In consequence of the Kafir War of 1851, the colonial authorities were compelled to abstain from meddling with the Trans-Vaal Boers, and were too glad to make terms with them ; for in 1851, all the native tribes of the Orange River sovereignty, the Basutos, the Bantams, the Baralongas, the Mantatees, the Korannas, the Griquas, and the Bastards, recommenced cutting each other's throats, and stealing each other's cattle ; and the bewildered and helpless representative of the Majesty of Great Britain, whose duty it was to preserve order in this pandemonium, was full of terror lest the confusion should be augmented by an invasion of the Trans-Vaal Boers under Pretorius. For the British President stated to Sir Harry Smith that Pretorius could readily lead across the Vaal 1,500 well armed and well mounted Boers ; that if he were to do so, he would be joined by the majority of his countrymen in the Orange River territory, for two-thirds of them were rebels at heart ; that he would likewise have at his call some thousands of natives belonging to the chiefs Moshesh and Moletsani. I have already described, on the authority of Sir George Cathcart, the formidable force of 6,000 well-equipped and well-mounted horsemen, with which Moshesh encountered us, a year afterwards, on the field of Berea. And the British President added, that if these events were to occur, a very large military force would then be required to restore anything like peace,

and that the cost to the Government would amount to an enormous sum. At that moment we had not one single soldier to spare in South Africa. We had about 7,000 troops actively engaged on the eastern frontier of, the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. In that hour of need it was proposed to call to our aid some thousands of Zoolah auxiliaries from Natal. The experiment was too dangerous a one. It had soon to be abandoned; for all the coloured races of South Africa seemed to be leagued against us, either for open or treacherous war. Hottentots and Kafirs, who had exterminated each other for centuries, offered to join with the Boer to drive us out of the land.

The Colonial Authorities were, therefore, well pleased when, in the autumn of 1851, they received a letter, signed by Pretorius, as the Commandant-General of the Independent Government of the Trans-Vaal Boers, in which he offered, in the name of his government, to open negotiations with the British Government, with the view of concluding a treaty of peace and friendship. At that time Pretorius was an outlaw, for whose apprehension a sum of £2,000 was offered. Therefore, as a necessary preliminary to negotiations, instructions were sent from this country to cancel the outlawry of Pretorius. Finally, on the 17th of January, 1852, a convention was signed, on the Banks of the Sand River, between the British and Trans-Vaal Governments, which was confirmed with "great satisfaction," by Sir George Cathcart, and approved of by the Right Honourable Baronet, the late Secretary of State for the Colonies. By this treaty, the British government "guaranteed, in the fullest manner, "to the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal River, the right "to manage their own affairs, and to govern themselves "without any interference on the part of the British "Government." And the British Government also "dis-claimed all alliances whatsoever with whomsoever of the "coloured nations north of the Vaal River."

The ratification of this convention was, in my opinion, a wise and prudent act on the part of the government. It put an end to our chase after the Boer. It was high

time to do so. We had hunted him for eighteen years; for it was in 1833 that Lord Derby first unkenneled the Boer on the eastern frontier of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope. Since then we had followed him at a break-neck pace, Lord Derby and Lord Grey leading for many a hundred mile, up the steep mountains, over the rugged karroo, across the deep kloofs, the broad rivers, and the wide plains of South Africa. Still, in 1851, the Boer was many hundred miles a-head of us, and if we were to continue the chase as Lord Grey proposed, we should have to follow him to the Equator, and probably earth him in the Mountains of the Moon; for the events which I have narrated prove the Boer to be staunch, and determined not to be caught.

Therefore, I repeat, that it was a wise and prudent act, on the part of the government of Lord Derby, to ratify the Sand River convention. It is important, however, that there should be no misunderstanding about the greatness of the change made by that convention in the principles of our South African policy. By it we abandoned and reversed the policy which Lord Derby commenced in 1833, and which had been vigorously acted upon up to 1852; for, by that convention, we bound ourselves not to interfere between the Boer and the natives—we promised not to make treaties with the independent tribes adjoining to the Boer—and, in fact, we repealed the 6th and 7th of Will. 4, c. 57. Therefore, by that convention we abandoned the treaty system, we abandoned the system of defending the Boer against the native, and the native against the Boer, by means of British troops, and at the expense of this country;—we agreed that the Boers should re-establish their old system of self-defence, which we abolished in 1833; and we consented that a limit should be put to the extent of the British dominions in South Africa.

The Sand River Convention has therefore settled, and, in my opinion, properly settled, the chief questions of South African policy. The only one which remains to be determined is, what should be the boundary line of the British dominions in South Africa, whether it should be

the Orange River or the Yellow River, and to whom the intervening space should belong. I admit, that to determine this question we should take into consideration not only the comparative cost and value of the Orange River territory, but any moral obligations under which we may be to its inhabitants, and which might forbid its abandonment with honor. Do any such obligations exist? Who are the inhabitants of the Orange River territory? What claims have they upon us? They consist of about 100,000 savages, and about 10,000 persons of European race. The savages may be divided into real tribes and sham ones. The real tribes are two in number, namely, the Mantatees and the Basutos, who contain at least four-fifths of the native population. The Mantatees invaded the Orange River territory about thirty years ago, and drove the Basutos across the Caledon River; they have generally been on good terms with us. The Basutos, on the contrary, have of late years been hostile to us. In 1851, the Basutos endeavoured to induce the Trans-Vaal Boers to attack us: in 1852, they encountered us, as I have already said, on the field of Berea. I cannot, therefore, conceive that we are under any obligation either to the Mantatees or to the Basutos, to retain possession of their territories. In fact, our assumption in 1848 of sovereignty over those independent tribes, whom we called our allies, was an arbitrary act, to which they never gave their consent. And at present the Basutos, according to Sir George Clerk, would be glad to be freed from our authority. Next with regard to the claims of the sham tribes. They consist of the remains of broken tribes, of runaways from the larger tribes, of vagabond Hottentots, Bastards, and other banditti, whom some missionary had collected together and called a tribe. The nominal chiefs of these sham tribes are, according to the statement of Sir George Cathcart, "little better than men of straw set up by the missionaries to represent territorial possessions held by their sect." In the names of these sham chiefs treaties have been concluded with the British Government. The Baralong, the Bastards, and others, whose name I forget, are tribes of this description. Though the number

of their population is insignificant, yet they have been the pests of the Orange River territory, frequently committing depredations upon the Boers and the larger tribes. And when these have attempted to punish them, they have sought assistance and protection from the British Resident, which they have generally obtained through the influence of their missionaries. This intermeddling led to disputes with the larger tribes, which frequently ended in petty wars.

I will mention, on undoubted authority, an instance of this kind which recently occurred. In 1852, according to Sir George Cathcart, the Platberg Bastaards quarrelled with Moshesh, chief of the Basutos, at the instigation of the Resident and the missionaries. Commissioner Owen described this tribe "as nothing more than a set of vagabond Hottentots, who had applied repeatedly to him and his colleague, Major Hogge, for a supply of ammunition, which had been invariably refused them; but during Major Hogge's illness, and Mr. Owen's absence, the Resident had most unadvisedly supplied them with 100 lbs. of gunpowder and 200 lbs. of lead, upon which they immediately set out upon a marauding expedition into Moshesh's country, shot several of his people, and carried off about 3,000 head of cattle and 280 horses, which they brought into our territory." Mr. Owen added that "Moshesh was of course much incensed at this conduct."

These proceedings increased the ill feeling of Moshesh towards the British Government, and a few months afterwards Sir George Cathcart found it necessary to lead a body of 2,000 troops against that chief. This expedition, to which I have already referred, cost us many valuable lives. It shewed how formidable an enemy Moshesh was, and how large a military force would be required to keep him in subjection if we were to retain the Orange River territory. I admit that if we abandon that territory, the sham tribes must refrain from depredations, or they will suffer for their misdeeds; but I deny that we are under any moral obligations which would bind us to retain the Orange River territory, in order that they may

continue their depredations with impunity under the shield of British protection. With regard to the missionaries, I must say, though the conduct of some of them deserves censure, yet there are among them worthy and pious men, who have quitted civilized life for the purpose of improving and converting the natives. Unfortunately, their efforts have signally failed. I believe that there is not one well authenticated instance of the conversion to Christianity of any person belonging to the great Kafir race. The only result of the attempts to improve these savages has been to give them a taste for spirituous liquors, and to inspire them with an ardent longing for muskets and gunpowder. Consequently, many of the missionaries have turned their attention to the sale of temporal commodities, and as shop-keepers, they have a strong pecuniary interest in the permanent union of the Orange River territory to the British dominions.

I will next consider the claims of the European portion of the population of the Orange River territory. They consist of about 10,000 persons, of whom about nineteen in every twenty are of Dutch descent. These are the persons, or descendants of the persons, who originally emigrated from the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, or re-emigrated from Natal in the hope of escaping from our dominion. Most of them have been long and perseveringly hostile to our Government. I have already stated that in 1845 we had to send an expedition against them: in 1848 they were delighted at the overthrow of our sovereignty by Pretorius; in 1851 they refused to assist the British residents against the native tribes, and would have joined Pretorius in again overthrowing us. Therefore, it would be preposterous to assert that we are under any moral obligation to these Boers to compel them to be our subjects. There may be, and I believe there are, some few individuals among them, who, when we abandon the Orange River territory, would deserve compensation for their attachment to the British Government, and to them, without doubt, compensation should be given.

The only claims which remain to be considered are

those of the British settlers, a few hundreds in number, not exceeding, I believe, one-twentieth of the European portion of the population of the Orange River sovereignty. These persons are chiefly storekeepers or land-jobbers; to the former class most of the missionaries belong; to the latter class all the civil officers of the government who, I am informed, have disregarded the orders against their purchasing land, and paid more attention to their territorial speculations than to their official duties. It cannot be denied that the interest of this class would be much promoted by the permanent union of the Orange River territory to the British dominions. For to maintain that union a considerable force and a large military expenditure would be required; then the trade of the storekeeper would thrive, the worthless acres of the land-jobber would acquire value, and the losses of the speculator would be converted into gains. These pleasing consequences of British dominion have long been fondly anticipated by the settlers. They now claim the fulfilment of their expectations, and great would be their disappointment if they are not permitted to put their hands into the pockets of the British nation. Before we recognize the validity of such claims, let us consider the amount of military force and expenditure which would be required in the Orange River territory.

It is asserted that a body of 400 troops would be a sufficient garrison. I hope that no person will be misled by such an assertion; and that if we are to retain the Orange River territory a force will be stationed there sufficient at all times to uphold our authority, and that the error committed on the eastern frontier of the Cape of Good Hope will not be repeated. For in the administration of the affairs of South Africa we committed two grave errors of a diametrically opposite description. The first was the engaging to defend the frontier by means of British troops: the second was the non-employing a force sufficient at all times to fulfil that engagement. Nearly every governor of the Cape of Good Hope has complained with justice of the inadequacy of his military establishment. The consequence was that the cunning

Kafirs, knowing our weakness, were emboldened to defy us, and to engage us in wars, which otherwise they would not have dared to wage. Thus false economy led ultimately to lavish expenditure. Do not let us repeat this error in the Orange River territory: if we are to retain that territory let us garrison it with a force sufficient at all times to impose upon our subjects and neighbours, both Boers and Kafirs. What would be the amount of force required for this purpose?

Upon this subject I will quote the opinion of the best the highest, and the latest authority:

Sir George Cathcart has stated in his despatch of the 14th November, 1852, that "he was decidedly of opinion that unless the British Government were prepared to garrison the Orange River territory with a force of not less than 2,000 men, one-fourth of which should be cavalry, it would be impossible to hold it and fulfil the engagements which are inseparable from an assumption of sovereignty, or even an engagement of armed intervention, without the constant humiliation and impolicy of manifesting to all the surrounding tribes and nations an attempted undertaking on the part of the British Government devoid of the means of giving it effect; and whilst the natural course of things in succeeding generations must progressively call for increasing expense of government, and probably frequent remote and expensive wars, he was unable to see a prospect of any proportionate advantage that could ever be derived from this acquisition of territory either to the colony or to the mother country."

When I consider that 100,000 warlike savages inhabit the mountain fastnesses of the Orange River territory: that its frontier is open for 400 miles to the incursions of the Zoolahs and other fierce tribes of the great South African race: that there are beyond the Vaal 20,000 independent Boers, sympathising with their 10,000 disaffected kinsmen in the Orange River territory: when I reflect upon the difficulty of procuring succour from the distant military posts of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, I feel convinced that Sir George Cathcart has not over-esti-

mated at 2,000 men, the military force which would be required to retain possession of the Orange River territory. I should also observe that this estimate was made by Sir George Cathcart, before we had learnt from experience the surprising efficiency of the Basuto cavalry both in number and equipments.

Let us next consider the cost of maintaining a body of 2,000 troops in the interior of South Africa. In addition to the ordinary military expenditure, we should have, in the first instance to provide barracks for them. But building in the Orange River territory is excessively expensive, three or four times as much as in this country. For the territory is destitute of materials for building: scarcely a stick of timber grows on it: the cheapest wood used is the Norway pine, which is brought 400 miles from the nearest seaport, over a country without roads. And when buildings are erected, they soon become dilapidated, their walls decaying under the ravages of ants, which swarm in all the soil and through all the flooring. Secondly, we should have to import into the Orange River territory all military stores, clothing, and every commodity required for the use of the soldiers, with the exception only of beef, mutton, and grain. The cost of conveying goods to the Orange River territory is very great: for they have to be brought either from Port Elizabeth, or from the Cape of Good Hope in waggons, each of them drawn by a span of fourteen oxen. The journey from Port Elizabeth occupies at least six weeks, and from Cape Town at least two months. To add to the difficulty of these journeys, during the dry season, water near the road is scarce, and wood, either dry or green, sufficient to boil a camp-kettle, must, at all times, be carried for distances of several day's journey: and in seasons of drought, which are of common occurrence, the country is impassable. For instance, the surgeon in charge of a detachment at Bloen Fontein was, for a year, very short of medicines, in consequence of the drought rendering the country so impassable that the periodical consignment of these supplies remained, for many months, at a distance of 150 miles, without a possibility of his getting them conveyed to Bloen Fontein.

For these reasons I am convinced that I have not over-estimated, at £200,000 a year, the cost of maintaining a body of 2,000 troops in the Orange River territory; one-fourth of them to be cavalry. At this rate of expenditure the Orange River territory would cost us about £20 per head, per annum, for every person of European descent in it; and about £400 per head, per annum, for every British settler. No wonder that these gentlemen, both storekeepers and land-jobbers, are so vehement in their assertions that the honour of England requires us to retain possession of the Orange River territory. In all probability, the military expenditure would decuple their trade.

What should we get in return for this expenditure? Exaggerated statements have been made of the capabilities of the Orange River territory. It is, like the rest of South Africa, fertile, with water; sterile, without water; and water is generally scarce. On the western flanks of the Drachensberg Mountains, where the natives dwell, sufficient rain falls for the production of every description of grain; but the greater portion of the territory consists of barren plains, inhabited by numerous flocks of frequently half-starved antelopes. On these plains rains are not frequent; but, when they fall, nutritious grass rapidly springs up. In the central districts, severe drought sometimes prevails for four years together, and, at other times, every thing green is consumed, for a couple of years following, by locusts. The climate is healthy. Merino sheep thrive, and produce wool of a fine staple, but the Boers prefer larger carcasses, with more meat and coarser wool. Therefore, the export of fine wool from the Orange River territory can never be considerable; for no Englishman, in his senses, would think of going to the interior of South Africa to rear Merino sheep, amidst Boers, wild beasts, and the most warlike of savages, when he can do the same thing, with far more profit and pleasure, in the Australian colonies, which possess ten times the capabilities, without the chief disadvantages of the Orange River territory. It is evident, therefore, that whatever may hereafter be the trade of that territory,

in wool, or ivory, or other commodities, it must originate with the Boer; and consequently as we possess the sea-board, it must be carried on through us, whether we retain or abandon the Orange River territory.

It is said, that a large amount of capital has been invested in the Orange River territory by British settlers, not only in mercantile pursuits, but in buildings, and in permanent improvements. I question the accuracy of this statement; for most of the British settlers reside in the villages of the Orange River sovereignty, of which there are only four. By far the largest of them (its metropolis) is Bloen Fontein. It contains, however, only seventy houses; none of these with more than a ground floor; of these fourteen are flat-roofed; the remaining fifty-six are thatched. In all there are thirteen shops. The population, exclusive of the military, amounts to not more than 300 persons, who depend for their support, chiefly, upon the military expenditure. The three other villages are insignificant in comparison with Bloen Fontein. With regard to the permanent improvement of landed property, I am informed that there are only 139 British landowners in the Orange River territory. It is true that they possess about 2,500,000 acres, or about 18,000 acres each, and that the twelve civil officers of the Government hold about 300,000 acres, of which upwards of 160,000 acres belong to the British Resident. But the amount of capital which these gentlemen have invested in the improvement of their vast estates cannot be considerable, for I am informed that on an average each of them has only a single acre in cultivation, or about 139 acres out of 2,500,000! or one acre in every 18,000!

These facts, I think, negative the assertion, that a large amount of capital has been invested by British settlers, not only in mercantile pursuits, but in buildings and permanent improvements. I admit, however, that if these persons can show that they would suffer any positive and present loss from the abandonment of the sovereignty, ample, and even generous compensation should be given them; for on the most extravagant estimate, the sum required for such a purpose could not amount to half what

it would cost us to garrison the Orange River territory for a single year.

The last argument in favour of retaining the Orange River territory to which I will refer, is contained in the assertion, that it is the only connecting link, by land, between the colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal. This assertion is founded upon the fact that there are only two roads between these colonies; the one through Kafirland, the other through the Orange River territory; the former is the direct and shorter road, but as it passes through the country of the Amakosa and other Kafir tribes, with whom we have frequently been at war, it is liable to be intercepted. Therefore it is said, that the other road, through the Orange River territory (which, however, passes through or near the country of the hostile Basutos), must be retained for purposes of commerce and communication between the colony of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal. But for these purposes this road is of little or no value. For all trade and intercourse between these colonies are carried on by sea, and will continue to be so. Both colonies are situated on the shores of the ocean, and both are separated by steep, sterile, and rugged mountains from the Orange River territory, which is in the centre of South Africa. Therefore, a traveller from the colony of the Cape of Good Hope to Natal, through the Orange River territory, would have first to laboriously ascend the mountains to which I have referred, then to traverse the interior of South Africa for several hundred miles, then to recross the mountains, which from their precipitous character are appropriately called those of the "Dragon," and finally to descend on Natal. This road is long, difficult, and circuitous. The conveyance of goods by it from Cape Town to Port Natal would take from three to four months; whilst by sea they might be conveyed in six or seven days. I think, therefore, that it must be admitted that the Orange River territory is of little value as a connecting link between the colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal.

I have now examined the chief arguments which have been urged in favour of retaining possession of the Orange

River sovereignty, and I arrive at the conclusion, that sound policy requires us to abandon a territory, which can be of no use to us, either as a commercial colony, or as a military station, or as a place of resort for our emigrants; which is inhabited by disaffected Boers and hostile savages, and exposed to the incursions of the fiercest barbarians on the face of the earth; and which can only be retained by means of a large and increasing expenditure, and by imposing on our brave soldiers the most irksome and the least honourable of military duties.

Our dominions in South Africa ought to be confined within the limits which the physical form of that part of the globe has clearly traced; I mean, they should be confined to the terraced shores of the Southern and Indian Oceans. There for many a year to come we shall find ample employment in defending the eastern frontier against the Kafirs, without seeking new foes in the heart of South Africa—without scaling the Drachensberg and warring on the vast plains of the interior: and wars, fierce and costly, are certain to recur periodically in the Orange River territory, as long as we retain possession of it, and are only separated from the independent Boers and native tribes by the nominal boundary of the easily crossed Vaal River. The same policy which induced us to acknowledge the independence of the Trans-Vaal Boers ought now to induce us to establish the independence of their Cis-Vaal brethren, in the hope that they may reunite, and reunited, form the advanced guard of our possessions, in front of that line of mountains and deserts which nature seems to have designed for the permanent boundary and bulwark of the British Empire in South Africa.

THE END.



